

2002 Annual Report Executive Summary

Imperial County Enterprise Community

The Enterprise and Champion Community process has certainly revealed the importance of having communities, with the cooperation of their federal, state, and local government, develop strategic plans and implementation by alliances among private, public and nonprofit entities. This process has been successfully implemented in Imperial County and it will continue to be, because the community realizes the importance of working together to build a plan that will take them toward a new beginning.

A very significant accomplishment for the Calexico Community Resource Center was the introduction of a case management team. The purpose of this team is to better serve the client in receiving all the services that appropriately meet their needs. Currently, a client is assigned to only one organization. Thus, this team will review the case and might be assigned to more than one organization. They have also implemented a new database system for case management. The database contains built-in reports and allows staff to understand the full range of services the family has received. This system is a great asset that allows Resource Centers to successfully continue providing services to the community.

The City of Calexico started Phase III of the Water Treatment Plant Improvement and Expansion in the beginning months of 2002. Phase III consists of land acquisition; environmental assessment (CEQA & NEPA review); annexation and parcel map; construction of a 6 million gallon reservoir pumping appurtenance and extension of the 24" water line. The construction of the additional filtration capacity of six million gallons per day, additional distribution pumps, and the construction of the 24-inch distribution main, has facilitated growth in both housing and commercial areas. With the construction of commercial, single, and multi family units there is a multiplier effect in the areas of temporary construction jobs, purchasing of household items, and additional purchases of goods and services. The emphasis of the Enterprise Community funding was to complete the engineering design needed to provide city sewer services to this area as well as street improvements. In doing these improvements, the subdivision of two parcels has provided for additional housing opportunities in the City of Calexico, where there is currently a 1 percent vacancy rate. This development will provide an increased property tax base to the city and development impact fees, as well as helping improve a blighted area.

The Department of Interior, in cooperation with the Salton Sea Authority, established the Salton Sea Science Office in 2001 in an effort to continue the excellent work of the Salton Sea Science Subcommittee. This research continues through 2002, in the Science Office to provide decision makers and the public with solid information, upon which all actions and recommendations of the Authority are based. The Science Office has held workshops to investigate a number of issues including eutrophication, salinity, air quality and a proposal from the Pacific Institute. The Solar Pond Pilot Project has been operating for over a year and has emerged as a cost-effective and viable option for reducing salinity. The Pilot Project is located on 10 acres adjacent to the Sea near Niland. The project began with ten ponds and has now grown to twelve, based on the data from the first half of the project. They have been constructed to determine how solar ponds work at the Sea and how to best design and site ponds on an operational basis. The ponds will remove most of the salt from the Sea brine on solid form. This amounts to 58 tons of salt per acre-foot of Salton Sea water. The Authority has budgeted about \$1 million to support this important project.

Beginning the construction of a health care facility in Niland, was a major accomplishment for Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo and the Enterprise/Champion Community members. Currently, the area is served by one small clinic with five employees, with the capacity for under 2,000 patients. The new clinic will have the capabilities to assist 5,000 patients in the 5,017 square foot building. The facility will include

seven exam rooms, a triage, nurse's station, a conference room and multiple administrative offices. This will create jobs for five to ten more people at least. This facility will also increase the value of the surrounding area with its up to date medical tools. The closest hospital is 17 miles away, in Brawley. Public transit was very limited, with only two runs a day between the two cities. Construction has started and will be finished by the end of February 2003.

During 2002, the Imperial Valley Small Business Development Center (IVSBDC) was active in serving 195 Enterprise/Champion Community (E/CC) clients with 457 hours of counseling and 2,687 hours of entrepreneurial training. This activity accounted for the creation of 13 businesses in the E/C C area and 11 jobs were created. We have coordinated 99 workshops with 1,196 participants within the Enterprise/Champion Community. The IVSBDC's willingness to make tough decisions to do what is right for our clients, not just what is easy or convenient is a significant accomplishment. We are not helping to build this Valley for the short term but for the long term. The future for Imperial Valley business depends on a shared sense of direction by all stakeholders as well as new approaches to local issues affecting our large minority business owner base. IV SBDC shows a strong commitment with our local partners, which nurtures a healthy business climate that helped bring \$8.7 million in financing to Imperial Valley small business in 2001. As we ended 2002, the figure was at \$6.8 million. The first month of 2003, we are at \$1.1 million. Thanks to all of our supporters, we will continue providing quality assistance to our clients.

Imperial County, with the cooperation of its federal, state and local officials will continue to adopt an integrated and coordinated approach to promoting sustainable development in its community. The input and ideas of the public will continue to be the guiding principle in creating a vision and plan for the future of Imperial County. As briefly demonstrated in the above mentioned best practices, the community's involvement and participation is the best approach to enhance the quality of life and spur economic growth throughout the community.